



CHIEF MOUNTAIN'S MEDICINE

The Indian Reading Series

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THE INDIAN READING SERIES
Stories and Legends of the Northwest

Chief Mountain's Medicine

Series IV

By members of the Gros Ventre Elders Board
from the Fort Belknap Reservation

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Dedicated to Raymond T. Gone, Sr.

Long ago when He-Flys-Alone's Grandfather was alive, the Gros Ventre were living in Canada. One day seven men decided to go on a war trail in search of enemies. They left the camp on foot and after a time came to the Sweet Grass Hills. Here, they saw much dust in the air and soon saw big herds of buffalo coming to the hills. Soon all the buffalo disappeared into a hole in the side of one of the hills.



Geo. Shields

The men went to investigate and found the hole that the buffalo had gone into. One man said, "Friends, we have been gone a long time and our people will think we have been killed. Let us look into this place where the buffalo went." All the men agreed. They took off their clothing and tied themselves together with rawhide rope. They left their guns with their clothes but took the ramrods to feel their way in the dark.



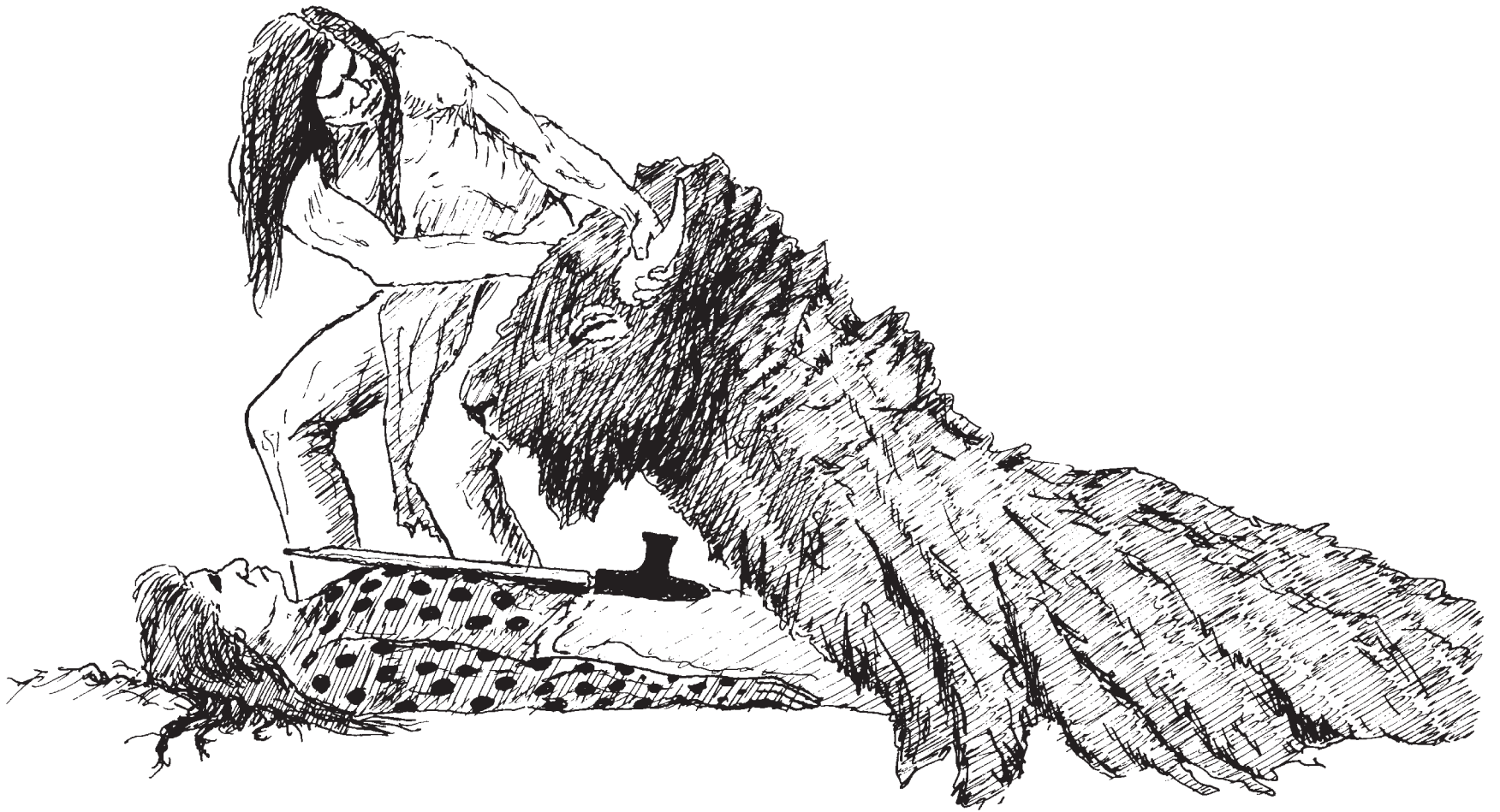
The men entered the cave walking as fast as they could, feeling their way with their ramrods. Some of them stumbled over piles of buffalo chips that covered the ground. After traveling a long way through the cave, they saw daylight and stopped. Not knowing what to do, and after a short talk, they decided to go on. Soon they came out in the daylight.



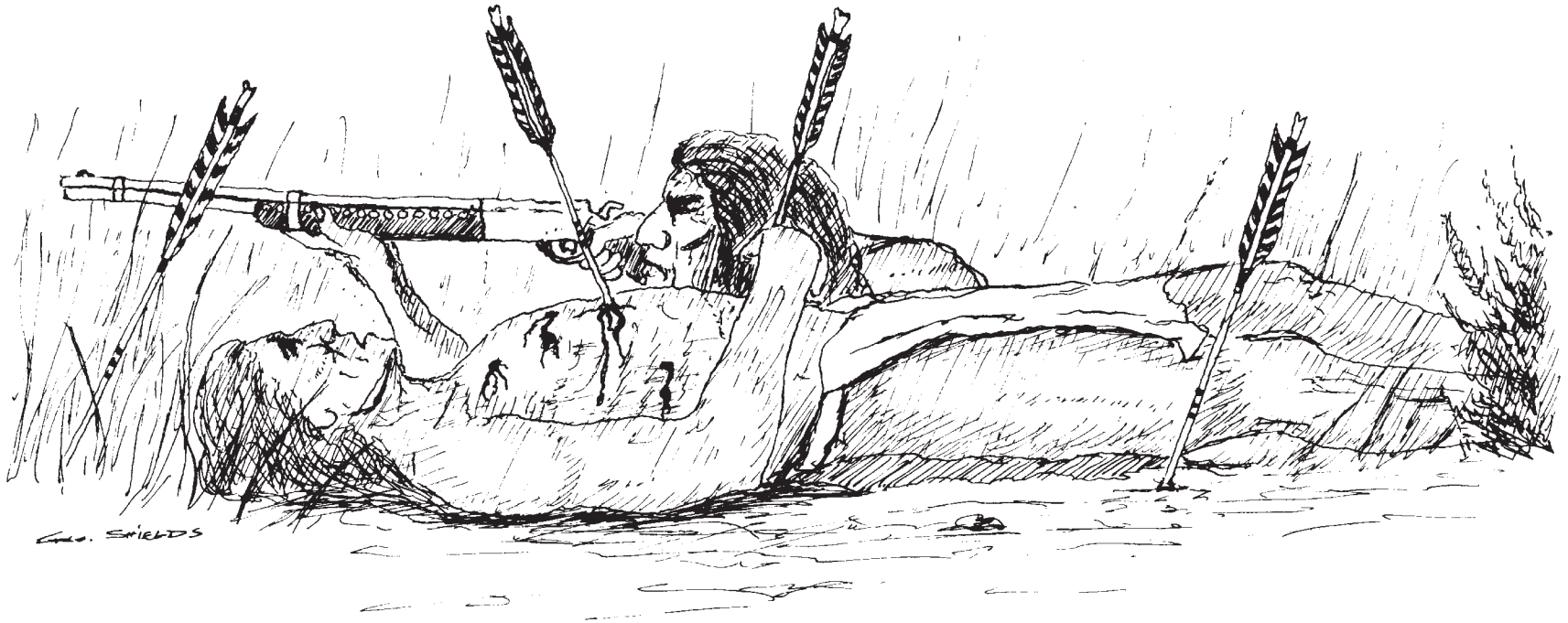
There were many buffalo trails leading in different directions. The men saw a river, trees and a lone lodge. In another direction, they saw a big camp of many lodges. This was beautiful country! One of the men wanted to visit the lone lodge but the rest were unwilling because they did not have their guns with them. They turned back and went into the cave and ran all the way back to the entrance. When they got out into the sunlight, they noticed that the sun was about half way between rising and noon. The sun was in the same place as when they had first entered the cave! They continued on their war trail.



That night one of the men, whose name was Chief Mountain, had a dream. He dreamed the owner of the lone lodge came to him and said, "I am sorry that you did not come to visit me. I will pity you and give you power and you will be great. If you are killed and want to return to life, have your friends paint your body yellow with black dots from the waist up. They must also point your head to the west and cover you with a buffalo robe. This robe should be one that has the head attached. They will place a black pipe on your chest, with the stem pointing in the same direction as your head. Then your friends must sing a certain song four times. After each song they will say, "Chief Mountain, it is time for you to get up and smoke." Even if you are badly cut up, this will bring you to life.



ARK. SHIELDS



All the Gros Ventre knew about this dream.

Once, Chief Mountain was in a fight and was riddled with bullets and arrows. He was killed and his friends used him as a shield to hide behind. Two of his sons were present at this fight. After the fight was over, they decided to try out his power.



The sons did exactly as the dream instructed. After the last song, Chief Mountain stretched and made a sound as one who is just waking up. He sat up, took the pipe and lit it and was recovered. Chief Mountain lived to be an old man.



When He-Flys-Alone was a boy, Chief Mountain took him on a walk along a river. He-Flys-Alone led the way. On the trail was a dry, bare, cottonwood log and when Chief Mountain stepped over this log, he died. To step over such a log was the only thing that he was not supposed to do. He-Flys-Alone did not know about this.

Two of Chief Mountain's sons wanted to try his medicine again, but the third son did not wish to. He thought this because Chief Mountain was so old. His face was wrinkled, he could not see very well, and most of his teeth were gone. So they did not try. Many people wondered if he would come back to life again.

Booklets available in the Level IV sequence are listed below. Numbers refer to the Planned Sequence of use in the *Teacher's Manual*. Materials developed by these tribes and others in the Northwest are included in the Levels I, II and III sequences.

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. <i>Warm Springs Animal Stories</i>
The Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs
Reservation of Oregon | 12. <i>Chief Mountain's Medicine</i>
Gros Ventre Tribe from the Fort Belknap
Reservation |
| 2. <i>Snail Women at Sq³a'le</i>
The Suquamish Tribe of the Port Madison
Reservation | 13. <i>Coyote the Trickster</i>
Burns Paiute Reservation |
| 3. <i>Blue Jay – Star Child/Basket Woman</i>
Muckleshoot Tribe | 14. <i>Running Free</i>
Shoalwater Bay |
| 4. <i>Assiniboine Woman Making Grease</i>
Assiniboine Tribe of the Fort Peck Reservation | 15. <i>Salish Coyote Stories</i>
Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead
Reservation |
| 5. <i>Coyote</i>
The Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs
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Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall
Reservation |
| 6. <i>How the Summer Season Came</i>
Assiniboine Tribe of the Fort Belknap
Reservation | 17. <i>Napi's Journey</i>
Blackfeet Tribe |
| 7. <i>Little Weasel's Dream</i>
Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead
Reservation | 18. <i>Warm Springs Stories</i>
The Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs
Reservation of Oregon |
| 8. <i>Fort Hall Stories</i>
Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall
Reservation | 19. <i>Tépee Making</i>
Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead
Reservation |
| 9. <i>The Bear Tépee</i>
Northern Cheyenne Tribe | 20. <i>Baskets and Canoes</i>
Skokomish Tribe |
| 10. <i>Sioux Stories and Legends</i>
Sioux Tribe of the Fort Peck Reservation | 21. <i>Warrior People</i>
Blackfeet Tribe |
| 11. <i>Kootenai Stories</i>
Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead
Reservation | |



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